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Clarke County Easement News

SUMMER

2010

Response to the Authority's New DUR Purchase Program Strong and Growing

The Authority's new easement purchase program – which offers cash payments in exchange for extinguishment of DURs – is barely eight months old. But it's already producing the desired result. [Ed. note: See Wyatt/Clark story below]

Since the beginning of the year, eight more property owners have given up 20 DURs and contributed 418.6 acres of open space to the county.

The offering price is based on the owner's income level and the conservation value of his or her land. Prices range from \$25,000 to \$40,000 per DUR with funds coming from the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services which are then matched by contributions from the county and donors like you.

If you have a DUR you don't want to use, consider applying for this program. It takes only a few minutes to complete the application and doing so will not obligate you in any way.

Click on "Applications" on the Clarke County Website for details: www.clarkecounty.gov/government/department_information/conservation/easement_authority.html

"We Can Still Do Everything We Ever Planned to With Our Land."

When Jim Wyatt and his wife, Kathy Clark were asked WHY they put their 62 acres on the mountain in permanent conservation easement, their answer was instantaneous: "Why not? We can still do everything we ever planned to with our land."

They've done a lot already!

Drive up their gently winding lane, which follows the path of the original logging road, and the first thing you see is a beautiful, low-slung cedar home they designed and built mostly themselves.

A top priority was ensuring no harm was done to the magnificent oak trees – some more than 60 years old – which surround them on all sides. This required several accommodations including building their deck around prize specimens.



Jim Wyatt and Kathy Clark are among the first landowners to take advantage of the Authority's new DUR purchase program

Year	Easements-Donated/Purchases	Acres	DURs Retired
2003	1 purchase	144.58	3
2004	2 donations	34.7	1 DUR, 13 lots Boyce
2005	7 donations, 1 purchase	312.6	5
2006	5 donations, 2 purchases	579.36	18
2007	22 donations	1261	45
2008	5 donations, 2 purchases	250.64	12
2009	1 donation, 3 purchases	483.59	13
2010	8 purchases	418.6	20
Totals	42 donations + 17 purchases = 59	3485	117 DURs & 13 lots

A respect for the land shows up in their volunteer choices as well. Self-professed "tree huggers," both Jim and Kathy are longstanding Blandy volunteers having filled just about every job with the Foundation of the State Arboretum including serving as President and Treasurer, respectively of the volunteer board.

The stewardship of their land has changed over the years evolving from simple protection to active nurturance. With careful harvesting and use of clear cutting techniques advocated by arborists, Jim and

Kathy hope to create a "healthier" forest that will foster the return of important wildlife such as grouse and turkey, which once roamed freely on the mountain.

When Kathy told people they had put their land in easement, she was both puzzled and pleased by their response. "Friends said things like 'Congratulations' and 'Good for you.'" Those comments, we believe, reflect the vital importance many place on protecting the rare beauty found in Clarke County and the profound gratitude one feels towards people like Jim Wyatt and Kathy Clark who are helping preserve it for generations to come.

"They've done it again!"



That's what donors had to say about the picture perfect weather, Authority Chair, Wingate "Winkie" Mackay-Smith and her husband delivered for the Authority's Donor "Thank You" Reception in June. This is the fifth reception they've hosted at their White Post farm.

Also catching donors' attention was the progress report Winkie provided on Authority accomplishments since the 2009 reception. Highlights include easement holdings now topping 3,000 acres – with close to 20% of that added in the past 12 months.

We're Looking for Someone Just Like YOU!

Do you have a family member, neighbor or friend who shares your interest in protecting open space in Clarke County? If so, would you be willing to share their name and address so we can send them a subscription to this newsletter? It's the most effective way to build awareness and attract support. Send your names to Alison Teetor at ateetor@clarkecounty.gov. And let us know if we can mention your name.

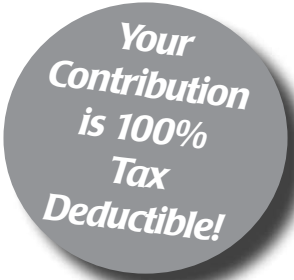
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Clarke County
Conservation
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101 Chalmers Court
Berryville, VA 22611

Summer 2010

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